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A word more, and we have done. We have asserted that our author did not seek, out of America, for the origin of the American races. Such would seem to be his opinion, when he asks the question (chap. x) "Who were the mound-builders?" and also in discussing "manners and customs as the basis of ethnic relations:" but in chapter xi, we find Dr. Foster asserting that he doubts not "that there will be found continuous and uninterrupted causes which shall explain all the diversities in the different branches of the human family, without the necessity of resorting to independent creations." To this we cannot subscribe, and think we see in it a contradiction to the whole tenor of the preceding chapters.

The antiquity of the redman in America can scarcely be measured; it is probable that he "witnessed the declining existence of the mastodon and megalonyx, in the later ages of the glacial period*" — that of the mound-builder can scarcely be greater, and efforts to trace his origin "to a common fountain of life, as with other races now inhabiting the earth, soon involve the investigator in the mazes of conjecture."

We learn from the preface of the volume before us, that Dr. Foster hoped at a later day "to draw more liberally from the materials at his command." It will ever be a source of regret that his untimely death has forever ended his valuable labors in American archæology. Valuable and interesting as is the work we have briefly reviewed, we doubt not but that a more comprehensive monograph from the same gifted source would have overcome many of the difficulties that now beset the path of American archæologists.—C. C. A.

CLASSIFICATION OF NORTH AMERICAN BEETLES.†—Since his recent return from a stay of several years in Europe, Dr. LeConte has applied himself to the study of our beetles, and with what success may be seen in the amount of work contained in the two pamphlets we notice in this number of the *NATURALIST*.

Though this second part is much smaller than the first, and treats of but two families, the Spondylidæ and Cerambycidæ, yet the work is done in the same thorough, comprehensive way that

* Dr. Jos. Leidy, in *Indigenous Races of the Earth*, p. xviii.

† Classification of the Coleoptera of North America. Prepared for the Smithsonian Institution by John L. LeConte, M. D. Part ii. Washington, May-June, 1873. 8vo. pp. 69.

characterized the first, and which places the author, in his masterly grasp of the subject, foremost among the living writers on Coleoptera.

Each family of beetles is fully characterized, with detailed descriptions of the subfamilies, tribes, and brief diagnoses of all the genera, together with interesting remarks of a general nature. The work when completed will necessarily be a complement as well as supplement of Lacordaire's famous "Genera of Coleoptera," and will invite the attention of European entomologists, while in America it will be the Coleopterist's *vade mecum*.

NEW NORTH AMERICAN BEETLES.*—Dr. LeConte, in this second part of "New Species of North American Coleoptera," describes eighty-nine new species of beetles, mostly from the Pacific coast. A number of new genera are also characterized.

BOTANY.

FLOWERING OF APLECTRUM.—With us the flowering of *Aplectrum hyemale* Nutt. appears to be an exceedingly rare event; so much so, that close watching of the plant in our woods, for several years, on my part, has been unrewarded by a single instance of its blossoming. The experience of others corroborates the conclusion that it is a shy bloomer, at least in Michigan. I am anxious for information on the point referred to, as regards other localities. A friend once succeeded in obtaining the flowers by taking up the plants in the spring, and keeping them in saucers of the rich black mould which the *Aplectrum* loves so well, thoroughly moistened. A plant which I once potted sent up a fine scape, several inches high, but, owing to the want of proper care during my absence from home, it did not come to perfection.

The *Aplectrum* was formerly well represented in the woods north of Detroit; but the encroachment of the city is fast destroying the station which was remarkable for the abundance of this rather scarce plant. However, it is, even now, far from exhausted. On the 20th of April, 1873, I took from a space about ten feet square, in a piece of beech woods, thirty of these plants, which I

*New Species of North American Coleoptera. Prepared for the Smithsonian Institution by John L. LeConte, M.D. Part ii. (Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (264), Washington, May-June, 1873. 8vo. pp. 71.